

APPROVED: Meeting No. 32-89

ATTEST: *Sharon A. B.*

MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND  
Meeting No. 29-89

June 6, 1989

The Mayor and Council of Rockville, Maryland, convened in Public Forum in the Council Chamber, Rockville City Hall, Maryland Avenue at Vinson Street, Rockville, Maryland, on June 6, 1989, at 7:40 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor Douglas M. Duncan

Councilmember Steve Abrams

Councilmember James Coyle

Councilmember Viola Hovsepian

Councilmember David Robbins

In attendance: Assistant City Manager Rick Kuckkahn and City Clerk Sharon Gran.

Re: City of Rockville Child Care  
Task Force Report

Eleanor Northway, Chairperson, and the following members of the City of Rockville Child Care Task Force were present to discuss their findings and recommendations with the Mayor and Council and other interested parties: Pamela Barkley, Kathleen Cohan, Thomas Curtis, Georgia Gardner, Andrew Johnson, Roslyn Klein and Jacqueline Smith.

The following recommendations of the full Child Care Task Force were discussed:

1. Designate a specific individual within the city hall staff who will serve as a liaison with the Child Care Division of Montgomery County and will keep the Mayor and Council informed on developments and changes in the field of child care.

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2. Develop a fact sheet on child care to be included in new resident packets and made available to the general public at the city's Public Information counter. This fact sheet will identify the city staff liaison on child care (see recommendation #1) above and include information on zoning requirements as they relate to child care, registration requirements, referral services, and pro bono legal assistance available from the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights.

3. Engage, in coordination with existing efforts on the part of Montgomery County, in an information campaign (perhaps through the Rockville Reports) aimed at unregistered providers and at prospective users of these providers, publicizing the advantages of registered family child care.

4. Initiate a lobbying effort aimed at urging Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to reevaluate the extent of its commitment to child care, in light of the current dependence of child care upon space provided by MCPS, and given that current space allotments in Rockville are not permanently dedicated to child care by MCPS.

5. Take an active role in providing incentives to the private sector to aid in the increase of affordable, convenient and safe child care. Specifically, the City of Rockville should provide matching "seed" money, in the form of low-interest loans, to employers who are committed to undertake employer-provided child care singularly or with other businesses in the form of a private consortium.

6. Create a pilot grant program, similar to the home improvement program, administered by the city and in cooperation with the Office of Child Care Licensing and Registration, for (a) those existing, unregistered family child care operations, so as to bring the homes up to registration standards; and, (b) those homeowners who wish to start up a child care business and need to make minor home improvements in order to meet registration standards. This program must require recipients of grants to stay in operation as a child care operator for a minimum prescribed period of time after receipt,

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or pay back the grant. Additionally, a household income maximum should be incorporated into the requirements for application as a needs test.

7. Work with other organizations to create a liability and health insurance pool primarily for family child care operations so that the cost of insurance can be defrayed through group rate discounts. Other organizations have begun efforts in this area. Merging such insurance pool programs in the future will broaden membership to a county- and a state-wide level and result in greater cost efficiencies.

8. Actively lobby the state legislature and county council to increase child care subsidy rates and revise income levels needed to establish eligibility to participate in state and county child care voucher programs.

9. Work with the county government and town center business leaders to examine the feasibility and need for a public/private child care center consortium to provide a child care operation to serve primarily city and county employees and other city residents.

10. Work with businesses during the development review process to explore the idea of and the need for providing child care facilities on-site.

11. Explore the feasibility of providing tax credits to developers and/or operators of child care facilities within the city limits.

12. Examine the feasibility of a scholarship program for the training of child care center staff and family child care providers. Such a program should require a commitment to work in child care for a specified period of time after training.\*

13. Amend the City of Rockville zoning ordinance to explicitly state that the operation of family child care homes for up to six children is a permitted use in all residential zones.

14. Amend the City of Rockville zoning ordinance to allow child care centers as a use permitted by special exception in the C-2 (General Commercial), 0-1

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(Transitional Office), I-3 (Industrial Park), I-4 (Restricted Industrial), TCO-1 (Town Center Office - One) and TCO-2 (Town Center Office - Two) zones.

15. Amend Section 4-205 of the zoning ordinance to:

(a) change the two classifications of child care homes described under the special exception procedures from the current 7 through 10 children and 11 through 20 children to 7 through 12 and 13 through 20 children, respectively, so as to keep consistent with the county zoning ordinance;

(b) for the newly defined classification of 7 through 12, eliminate the requirement for frontage and bring the lot size requirement into conformity with state regulations regarding outdoor square footage. Frontage concerns may be addressed in an advisory fashion by city staff in the special exception review process; and

(c) for the newly defined classification of 7 through 12, streamline the special exception review process. Specifically, the fee for the special exception application should be deleted. Once the application is filed, neighbors will be notified of the proposed use, as is presently done. The city staff will review the application in accordance with Article 4 of the zoning ordinance. If there are no objections voiced by neighbors, staff or other interested parties within 30 days, the application would be approved automatically. If an objection is made prior to the 30 day deadline, then the application would be placed on the city Board of Appeals agenda for review and action.

16. Amend the city zoning ordinance so that space devoted to child care does not count toward the calculation of the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) when development is proposed. Traffic generated from the proposed child operation shall still be included in the Standard Methodology traffic impact assessment performed at development review. Developers would be required to dedicate the identified space as child care use for a minimum of 5 years.

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17. Prohibit new housing developments from expressly denying the operation of family child care homes through the by-laws or covenants of associations and in rental agreements. This prohibition would not apply to those developments with rules stating that residents must be at least 50 years of age.

18. Fund a recently submitted request to the Mayor and Council by the Child Care Connection, Inc., a private, non-profit organization and member of the Metropolitan Washington Child Care Network, for a referral services grant. This service would significantly assist city residents in meeting their child care needs.

Following discussion, staff was requested to review the recommendations and present the Mayor and Council with a proposed timetable for implementation.

Re: Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 p.m., to convene again in Worksession at 7:30 p.m. on June 7, 1989, or at the call of the Mayor.